ILWACO RAILROAD

America's Westernmost Line

1888-1930

Thomas E. Jessett

Designed by the Oregon Historical Society.

The Ilwaco Railroad*

Thomas E. Jessett

Railroad-conscious visitors to the isolated little fishing village of Ilwaco, Washington, where the mighty Columbia River rolls into the Pacific Ocean, are amazed to see the steel rails of a narrow-gauge railroad set in the cement of the main business street. Inquiry reveals that for over forty years the sparsely settled peninsula stretching northwards for twenty-eight miles between Willapa Bay and the Pacific was served by this now almost forgotten pike. Moreover, it was a railroad that offered regularly scheduled passenger and freight service on a year-round basis, with special fares to points as far away as New York City. The population of the area served by the Ilwaco Railroad at its greatest extent is now just under 2,500. Lacking any large natural resources, the way in which the region came to possess a railroad—even one with a track measuring only thirty-six inches between the rails—excites some curiosity.

The Ilwaco Railroad, which for about eleven miles ran just a good stone's throw from the golden sandy beach that has made the area famous as a summer resort, was a product of the fertile imagination of Lewis Alfred Loomis, a business man who came to the peninsula in 1872. Loomis and his associates built a wharf at Ilwaco, organized the Ilwaco Steamship Company in 1875, and built the steamship *General Canby*, which operated between Astoria, Oregon, and Ilwaco.

Ships from California and elsewhere bound for Portland and the growing markets of the Pacific Northwest generally stopped at Astoria, which was a port of entry. Loomis conceived the idea of securing a mail contract and establishing a direct route from Astoria to Olympia, the capital of Washington. In this he was successful. The mail crossed from Astoria to Ilwaco on the *General Canby*, was moved by horse-drawn stage up the beach for thirteen miles and then across the mile-wide peninsula to Oysterville. Here it was loaded

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on another steamer owned by Loomis and carried across Shoalwater Bay to North Bend. Two more stages and another steamer completed the route to Olympia. In spite of all these transfers the mail contract was fulfilled and became a financial success.

The slowness of the stage line up the beach convinced Loomis that he should build a railroad to handle this business, and in 1882 efforts were begun to raise money. Associated with Loomis in the project was Jacob Kamm, a marine engineer, banker, and promoter from Portland, Oregon. A survey made in 1884 showed the project was feasible, and three years later, financing having proceeded satisfactorily, the right-of-way was purchased.

Actual construction began in March, 1888 at Ilwaco, where an engine shed, shops, turntable, water tank and other railroad essentials were built. Track was laid from the company's wharf up the main street of Ilwaco to the depot before the first locomotive and flatcars arrived. All this second-hand rolling stock was purchased from the Utah Northern Railway. The locomotive, a Baldwin Mogul (2-6-0), built originally in 1879, was given the number 1.

As the completed grade advanced northward, the crossties were cut from stands of nearby timber, shaped and laid. The track layers came next, followed by the locomotive pushing before it the flatcars laden with sixty-pound rail and other track material.

By July the railroad had reached the community of Long Beach, a distance of three and a half miles, and the event was marked by a celebration on the nineteenth. A special train ran the entire distance for the occasion, with passengers accommodated on four flatcars fitted out with plank seats, side railings and temporary cloth canopies to ward off the sun. At each end of the line there was a big banquet preceded by the usual speeches. Some orators let their imaginations picture the railroad line following the Pacific shore from Puget Sound to San Francisco. The celebration may have had other purposes also, for the following month the name of the corporation was changed from Ilwaco Steam Navigation Company to Ilwaco Railroad and Steam Navigation Company.

Track laying continued at a leisurely pace. But instead of going to Oysterville, the line was terminated two and a half miles south on Willapa Bay at Nahcotta, where there was a better channel and greater depth of water. Nahcotta, thirteen and a half miles from Ilwaco, was developed as the northern terminal. A dock was built there for the steamers, and an engine house, turntable, depot and machine shops for the railroad.

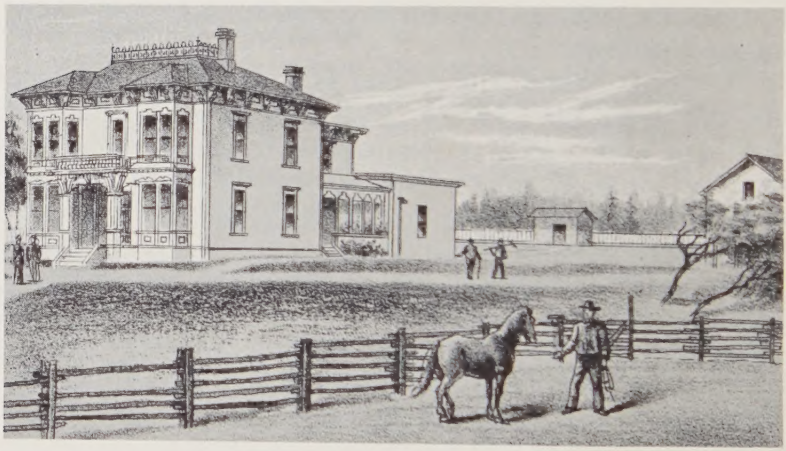
One of the directors, B. A. Seaborg, became piqued at the management and bought some acreage across the tracks from Nahcotta, where he set up the rival townsite of Sealand. He attempted to compete with a stage line and steamer, but lost out in a lawsuit and sold to the railroad.

Service over the entire line was begun in May 1889, with the lone locomotive handling both freight and passenger business. After some years three new coaches, the "Loomis," "Easterbrook" and "North Beach," were purchased, along with a combination baggage and passenger car named without imagination, "Combination." The first regular engineer was George Jennings, and the first regular conductor a man named Robinson.

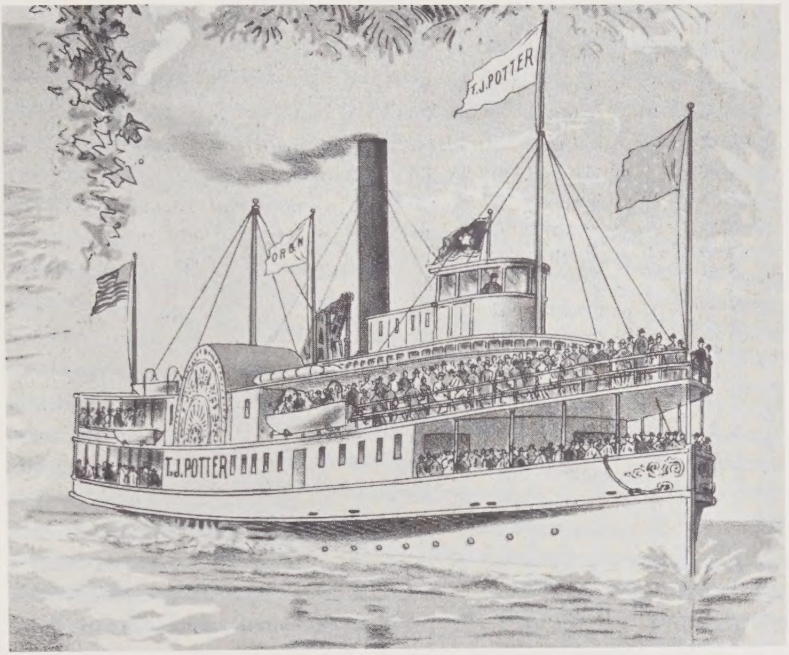
The new line was not to go unchallenged. John Adamblade of Long Beach resented the railroad crossing his land, and one night built a fence across the track. The next morning the engineer noted the obstacle, but concluding his diminutive locomotive was equal to it, he pulled down the throttle and charged through the fence.

The railroad prospered. In addition to the mail contract, passenger business and miscellaneous freight for the whole Willapa Bay area, it transported nearly a thousand eighty-pound sacks of oysters every week from Nahcotta, where they were brought by boat from Oysterville, to Ilwaco. From Ilwaco they were carried by the *General Canby* to Astoria for shipment to the market at San Francisco. The freight charge from Nahcotta to Astoria was seventy-five cents a sack. Tuesday was oyster day, and as the transfer from railroad to steamer took a long time, citizens with business in Astoria generally avoided that day.

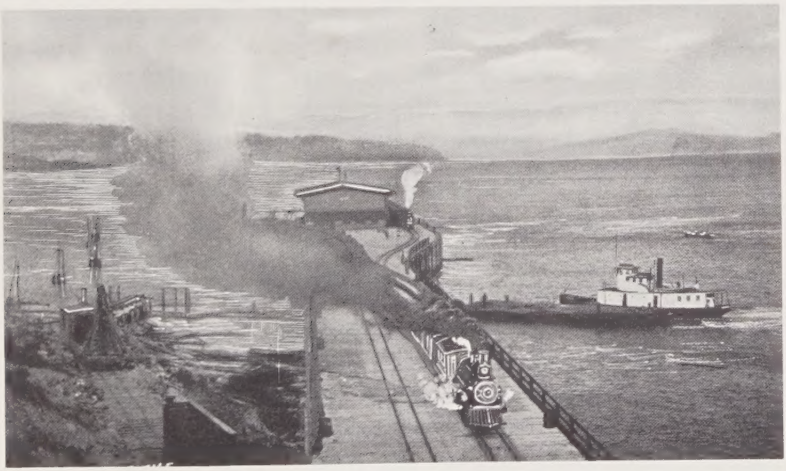
Engine number 1, "coach," and disgorged passengers near Nahcotta 1889.
Courtesy of author.



Residence of tidewater railroad baron A. L. Loomis at Loomis Station. OHS collections.



The first *T. J. Potter* booming downriver to Ilwaco terminal. OHS collections.



The tide flat terminal for the Ilwaco Railroad showing Y key. OHS collections.

In addition to oysters, the railroad hauled canned clams from Ocean Park, and in season, fresh cranberries from the various bogs on the peninsula. As business increased, it was soon obvious that additional equipment was needed. Jacob Kamm, now vice-president, was instructed to go east and arrange for the building and purchase of another locomotive. Kamm decided upon another Mogul engine, which was built by Porter-Bell & Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was shipped west on a flatcar, finally arriving at Kalama, Washington, via the Northern Pacific Railroad. It was towed to Ilwaco on a scow, and speedily placed in service.

For the next decade the Ilwaco Railroad and Navigation Company continued its profitable operation under Loomis, who kept a watchful eye on operations. He acted as his own section boss, and it is claimed no tie was replaced unless it was so rotten that the tip of his gold-headed walking stick went all the way through when he struck the tie with it. He built a large Victorian residence on a forty-acre tract facing the ocean—"Loomis Station"—which became a regular stop on the line. In fact, stops were made there at Loomis' convenience, sometimes of sufficient length to outrage the passengers.

Service on the railroad was devoid of formality, and the trainmen wore no uniforms. The dock at Ilwaco, the central place of business, could be reached by steamers only after the tide was in mid-flood. So each day for six days train departures were successively fifty minutes later; then in a quick shift the schedule moved up five or six hours. Probably the Ilwaco line was the only organized railroad to operate by a tide table.

The railroad's heaviest business came in the summer. The twenty-eight mile length of sandy beach was a summer vacation area for hundreds of people from the interior valleys. Some built summer homes at Seaview, Long Beach and Ocean Park, and as soon as school closed, families removed to the beach for the summer. There were no roads of consequence on the peninsula, so the railroad did a big business hauling passengers, baggage and food. Many families brought with them a cow to provide milk, and a horse and buggy for

riding on the beach, or on the road from Ilwaco to Long Beach. Flatcars were fitted with fenced sides to transport horses, cows and dogs.

Such a situation provided plenty of opportunity for dog stories. It is recalled that on one occasion a dog and its owner were on the platform at Seaview. Just before the train left the owner ordered the dog to run ahead. When it pulled in at Loomis Station some seven miles from Seaview, there was the dog panting up to Loomis. The owner may have proved a point or merely have been a thrifty man. Perhaps it should be said that the train had an extended delay at Long Beach that day.

The rest of the year life on the railroad was reasonably uneventful. In the fall when the geese were flying south, the train crew often stopped to shoot a bag near the spots where the flights rested. Veteran passengers took along a gun just in case, for all joined in the sport. Failing geese, there was always a chance at turkeys. Loomis kept a large flock of these birds, and every once in a while the engineer managed to get one. Usually this was accomplished on the way from Nahcotta to Ilwaco. The poached bird was picked up by a wary crew member on the return trip. Cattle roaming on the track were considered too big for game, and were chased off by the fireman.

While Ilwaco was the railroad's headquarters, the shops were at Nahcotta. Most of the equipment was kept there when not in use, and the train crews usually lived at Nahcotta. The wood for the locomotives was cut from stands near the tracks. Mr. Loomis also had timber on his land which he sold to the railroad for fuel.

A few untoward incidents disturbed the even tenor of the little railroad's life. A valuable bull owned by a resident of Long Beach was grazing on the right-of-way when the morning train steamed by his rear end. Alarmed at man's mechanical monster, he lit out for distant parts. Unfortunately, a fence intervened, and when he essayed to jump it, he miscalculated with disastrous results. His owner threatened to

shoot the engineer on his next trip; but when the train arrived on schedule she relented, and service continued without interruption.

The only fatal accident on the railroad occurred on Monday, August 18, 1895, when a section hand, David Hinman, was killed. He had spent the previous day with his family at Long Beach. At 2:00 a.m. he started to walk to Ocean Park to join his section crew. He reached Loomis Station three hours later, tired and footsore, and requested the loan of the company's handcar to continue his journey. Loomis at first demurred, but then relented. He gave Hinman a cup of coffee and sent him on his way. A heavy fog, rare in summer, blanketed the coast, and Hinman could not see far ahead. Ten minutes under way he was horrified to see the morning train roar out of the fog. Despite the frantic efforts of the engineer, the train crashed into Hinman's little machine before he jumped, severing his right leg. A physician on board the train tried to stop the bleeding until the company doctors arrived. Hinman was sent on to the hospital at Astoria, but died on the ferry from loss of blood and internal injuries, leaving his wife and three small children. No blame was attached to the engine crew.

A small boy playing around the hand-operated turntable at Ilwaco somehow injured himself in the machinery and died a few hours later. As the boy was trespassing, the company was not held responsible.

An accident which left a somewhat more humorous impression occurred on May 22, 1899, when a train consisting of locomotive, boxcar and "Combination" backed along the wharf at Ilwaco. Without warning part of the wharf collapsed, and locomotive, tender and boxcar toppled into the bay. The combine caught on the dock and was only partially submerged. The engine crew and some passengers on the front platform of the combination swam ashore, but eight others were trapped inside the car. They soon were helped out to safety, but not before one of them, a company official, gained local fame by allegedly calling out, "Save me first! I'm a company officer."

The tracks were laid on sand and often when the winds were high, drifts clogged the rails. On one occasion the engine crew miscalculated the power of their tiny locomotive to push through such an impediment, and the engine turned over. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

In the nineties the mainland across Willapa Bay from Nahcotta, where Raymond and South Bend are situated, rapidly increased its population. The Northern Pacific Railroad built into the region, immediately affecting the area's former dependence on the Ilwaco Railroad for the transportation of supplies. By 1892 South Bend mustered enough votes to take the county seat away from Oysterville, where it had been located since the organization of Pacific County in 1861.

Political activity occupied the attention of many citizens. When he first arrived, Loomis served a term as county commissioner, but thereafter declined to run for public office. However, like many others, he was active in political affairs, and it seemed that passes on the railroad were plentifully available around election time. At one time there was a dispute between the Ilwaco councilmen and the railroad. The editor of the *Pacific Journal*, published at Ilwaco, took the side of the councilmen. In retaliation, the railroad took away his pass. The annoyed editor published a "timetable" under a heading derived from the line's initials:

IRREGULAR RAMBLING AND NEVER-GET-THERE RAILROAD

Makes all points on the peninsula between Ilwaco and Nahcotta some time during the day unless unavoidably detained by running off the track.

TIME TABLE

Train Leaves

Ilwaco Dock — When it gets ready

Arrives At

Nahcotta — When it gets there

PASSENGER ACCOMMODATIONS

Any gentleman wishing to shoot snipe along the beach or to fish for trout in the various lakes can do so by notifying the engineer,

or

any lady desiring to visit for a few minutes at any place enroute, can

do so by notifying the president, who will always be found on the train.

THEIR ELEGANT STEAM TUB

Leaves Astoria every day that she can escape the eagle eye of the inspectors. Passengers are required to furnish themselves with life preservers, and to take their own risk, also a pair of stilts in case of low water on the spit.

Connections with Train at Ilwaco Wharf Not Guaranteed.

Fare.....All they can get.
Freight Rates.....The value of the package.
For terms—Apply to the President

NOTICE—A spotter is employed on every train to prevent the beach visitors from being robbed by the Ilwaco councilmen and attorney while enroute through the city. Keep on the train and no danger need be apprehended from this source. Passengers persisting in alighting in Ilwaco do so at their own risk.

From thenceforth it was known by this name among the patrons.

A third locomotive, a little two-and-a-half ton Mogul of Porter-Bell manufacture called Number 3, was purchased in February, 1900, from the Cascade Railroad. After only five months' service, it was sold for $600, a loss of $300. No. 3 was twenty-three years old and had seen service on three lines before she was purchased by the Ilwaco road, and apparently was too decrepit for the job. An old boiler on Sand Island in the river before Ilwaco may be her remains.

For some years the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company had been acquiring small narrow-gauge lines along the Columbia River, and rumor had it they would build down to Knappton, eleven miles up-river from Ilwaco. During the nineties the O. R. & N. quietly bought up all available stock in the Ilwaco Railroad and Navigation Company, acquiring the holding of Vice-President Jacob Kamm. In 1900, Mr. Loomis sold out to the O. R. & N. Company for $142,000 and retired.

The O. R. & N. Company assumed active management in August, 1900, and immediately began to apply more orderly

and rigid controls. Air brakes and knuckle couplers became standard equipment, and train crews acquired uniforms. Regular depots were built at Seaview and Long Beach to replace the shed-like structures formerly used. A logging dock was added at Nahcotta, and a good business developed hauling logs. They were towed across Willapa Bay to Nahcotta, and then moved to Ilwaco by rail, where they were dumped into the Columbia River for towing to a mill. Higher log prices on the river front yielded a profit for a little over two years. A number of small log-buggies were added to the railroad to handle this business. When it declined with the introduction of huge sea-going log rafts, the log-buggies became rock and work cars. The railroad now operated eight boxcars and two cabooses, one of which was always attached either to the log train or the work train.

About 1903 the O. R. & N. sent Edward Budd to Ilwaco as superintendent of the line. Upon his return from his first inspection of this thirteen-mile responsibility, he was asked what he thought of it. A man of few words, he replied: "Humph! Clamshell Railroad." Although no clam shells were used on the roadbed, the name stuck, and it was often referred to as the "Clamshell Railroad" as well as the Irregular, Rambling and Never-get-there Railroad.

The more systematic O. R. & N. Company was bothered by the irregulartity of the service due to the steamers from Astoria and other river ports having to wait for a tide to get over the sandbar into Ilwaco. An extension up-river to a better site with permanent deep water was considered, but since a long jetty was under construction at the river mouth on the Oregon side, the issue was delayed to see if this would remedy matters. After six years the jetty was completed, but there was no improvement at Ilwaco. Something had to be done.

In November, 1906, a contract was let to the Columbia Valley Railroad Company, an O. R. & N. subsidiary, to build a line from Cook's Station on the Columbia River just above Point Ellice to a junction about a mile north of Ilwaco. The contract price was $280,000 and the distance 13.39 miles. By March, 1907, between 400 and 500 men were at work, but

they progressed slowly because a rock tunnel had to be cut under Fort Columbia. Meanwhile a new corporation, the Ilwaco Railroad, was formed in June, 1907, to take over the construction work and the old Ilwaco Railroad and Navigation Company. Construction was still slow, and it was not until April, 1908, that the rails reached Chinook. Work then speeded up, and on June 1, 1908, the line opened from the new terminal, Megler, to Nahcotta. The first train of a baggage car and two coaches met the steamer *Nahcotta* at Megler, and departed from there at 8:30 a.m. It arrived at Nahcotta three hours later. The return train left Nahcotta at 12:00 p.m. and arrived at Megler at 3:00 p.m.

Many changes accompanied the opening of the new length of track. Four additional locomotives had already been purchased, to augment construction work. The first, a Baldwin Mogul built in 1880, came from the Portland and Willamette Railroad in 1906, and cost $500. It was given the number 4. From the Southern Pacific Railroad in California were purchased two Baldwin Americans (4-4-0) and these were given the numbers 3 and 5. One built in 1880 cost $2,645, and the other built in 1887 cost $2,500. Likewise a Baldwin Ten Wheeler (4-6-0) was purchased for $5,700, and numbered 6. From the same source the Ilwaco Railroad also bought several coaches and a baggage car. Deliveries were made in 1907 and 1908. During the latter year engine No. 2 was scrapped.

A large dock, depot, train shed and steel turntable were built at Megler with other improvements to the line, including good depots at Chinook and Nahcotta. Sidings were located at Fort Columbia, Chinook, Ilwaco, Long Beach, and The Breakets, and a water tank at Holman. A four-stall roundhouse was added at Nahcotta. Rail on the new extension was ninety-pound, and gradually the old sixty-pound rail was replaced on the Ilwaco-Nahcotta section, for the Ten Wheeler was far too heavy for the lighter rail.

Ilwaco, in spite of being cut off by a Y about a mile from town, continued as the headquarters for the railroad. Most trains backed into Ilwaco from the Y, generally referred to as Ilwaco Junction.

With regular boat service from Astoria and Portland now

assured, the Ilwaco Railroad introduced additional train service. In addition to the three regularly scheduled trains, there was an occasional fourth passenger train, and a daily freight train, except on Sunday. During the winter season the late afternoon trains were discontinued, and the scheduled passenger trains carried some freight.

The big business came on summer weekends when hundreds of vacationing Portlanders came down the river on the palatial sidewheeler, *T. J. Potter*. Every passenger car was put into service. The late Saturday afternoon boat and train bringing hundreds of menfolk to the beach was known as "the husband's special." The *Potter* carried between six and seven hundred passengers, so there were times when the passenger cars were unable to hold everyone and the old flatcars with benches were placed in use to handle the crowd. On such occasions baggage followed in freightcars. Pulling these weekend passenger trains was the job of the big Ten Wheeler; otherwise this engine was little used as she was hard on the roadbed along the sandy peninsula. Collecting fares on the weekends was a big job in which the brakemen assisted the conductor. At times the train had to be halted before entering a major stop in order to get all the fares in hand.

The fare from Nahcotta to Portland was always referred to by the agent at Nahcotta as "four and six," which sometimes puzzled easterners. He meant four dollars and six bits, or in ordinary American, $4.75. The fare from Nahcotta to Megler was $1.25. Local fares on the line were low, and in the winter there was considerable laxity about collecting it from neighbors when due to be paid on the train. The ten cent fare from Ocean Park to Nahcotta was most frequently overlooked.

In 1911, all Union Pacific subsidiaries in the states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho, of which the O. R. & N. Company was one, were merged into the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company. The rolling stock was relettered, and the line became the Ilwaco Division, O.W.R. & N.R.R. About this time old No. 1 was scrapped, and the

other locomotives renumbered. No. 3 became No. 1, No. 4 became No. 2, No. 5 became No. 3 and No. 6 now No. 4. For a time the letter N preceded the number, denoting narrow-gauge, but this was later dropped when the line was relettered Union Pacific. All locomotives were converted to oil at this time. Supplies of oil were kept at Megler except for an emergency tank at Nahcotta. No tank cars were owned by the company and the oil for the tank at Nahcotta was carried up from Megler in a tender taken from one of the non-working locomotives.

In spite of all these improvements the Ilwaco Division still kept some of its country ways. When the salmon were running in the Columbia in the early fall, it was not unusual for the train crew to stop and net a few large fish for home consumption. One love-smitten fireman had the engineer stop the train along the Columbia River so he could pick some flowers for his sweetheart in Ocean Park.

The train crew showed their community spirit in unusual ways. The *Ilwaco Tribune* recorded on December 30, 1911, that

> Conductor Gold's train made its trips Christmas Day decorated in evergreens and holly berries and with a perfect picture of Santa Claus, wearing a genuine flowing beard, on the head of the engine, Capt. Gold says he ordered mistleto [*sic*] bows for the car doors, but was unable to secure them.

Mr. Loomis died at his home on July 19, 1913, and was buried with Masonic honors in the Oysterville Cemetery beside his wife, who had preceded him in death by two years. A special train drew the funeral party from Loomis Station to Nahcotta, as was done at the time of Mrs. Loomis' burial.

Criticism of the ways of the railroad continued under the new management, for the O. W. R. & N. Company found the line was not profitable, and kept expenses to a minimum. Exasperated after what must have been an uncomfortable ride, the editor of the *Ilwaco Tribune*, Charley L. Gant, composed and printed in his paper in September, 1914, the following:

THE PENINSULA PIKE

There's a railroad they call the Peninsula Pike—
Go get me the Bible and read it—
Just two streaks of rust on top of a dyke—
O, where is salvation? I need it.
From Megler this railroad goes winding about,
Like two streaks of rust in an alley,
On low joints and high joints we're jostled about,
Till the doctor can scarcely make us rally.

From Megler to Holman there's 900 pains,
To scourge your anatomy's function.
In fact those who ride are near void of their brains,
When they get down to Ilwaco Junction.
You ache in your feet and you ache in your legs,
You ache in your arms and your shoulders.
In fact one can scarcely stand on their pegs
As he bounds over split logs and boulders.

There is no place to stop when you wait for a train,
If raining, if sunshine or storming,
If chilled to the core you may struggle in vain,
You'll surely find no way of warming.
It's the hen wallow shuffle you get every mile,
The half Nelson hold and the strangle;
And agony lurks where there should be a smile
And the trip is a terrible wrangle.

This railroad was built just after the flood—
No effort's been made to improve it,
Just two streaks of rust in the weeds and the mud,
And nothing, it seems, will behoove it.
Thousands of ties nearly rotten today,
Bridges unsafe as the devil,
The rails were aged when laid, they say,
But the roadbed is not on the level.

The spikes are all rusted and loose as old teeth,
The fish plates have passed all redemption;
The whole thing is dead; so I am weaving this wreath—
As a railroad it's surely an exemption.
This railroad is owned by the famous U.P.,
The same as the Southern Pacific,
And the way the whole looks now to me
Is something most damnably terrific. . . .

"Cattle on the Tracks."

But with county taxes of $18,000 a year who can blame the management?

World War I brought troops to the region, some to cut the remaining stands of white pine, and others to guard the beach. The life-saving station at Klipsan, established in 1889, was reinforced, as was the station at North Head. Upon several occasions when additional help was needed the railroad transported the lifeboat and crew from Klipsan to the nearest point where it could go to aid a distressed ship.

But it was the automobile that caused the Ilwaco Division to go into a real decline. A road was built from Long Beach to Ocean Park in 1911, and those who could afford automobiles wanted them on the peninsula, which was inaccessible by road. The fare for transporting an automobile from Portland to Ilwaco by boat was $80. After the war the fare from Astoria to Ilwaco was $13, but the owner of the car had to load it on a flatcar at Megler for the ride to Ilwaco himself, and also unload it. The railroad did provide the necessary planks for this operation.

Recognizing an opportunity in the railroad's lack of interest in the automobile business, an enterprising businessman established an eight-car ferry from a point near Astoria to McGowan, from whence a road ran to Ilwaco. Two trips were made daily and the tariff was from $3.50 to $5.00 depending on the weight of the automobile. Spurred by this competition the railroad extended the road to Megler, reduced its rates, and began ferrying automobiles across the Columbia. The building of a bridge over Bear Creek in 1922 joined the peninsula to South Bend by road and made it much more accessible for automobiles.

Chinook and Ilwaco shipped large quantities of canned salmon over the railroad to Megler for trans-shipment to the east. But the oyster business declined from 1,200 to 2,000 sacks per week to a mere 200 or 300 sacks. The native oysters were dying out, and while the price of oysters rose fifteen hundred per cent, the industry declined. The substitution of a larger oyster from Japan did not prove successful in recapturing the fresh native oyster business.

The Union Pacific strove to keep the railroad going by advertising that the line was "Safe, Convenient and Adequate," and that it offered "Rates lower than before the War," that its trains "pass directly in front of all the beach hotels," and by offering "Special Low Summer Rates from All Points to North Beach," but all was in vain. A consolidated high school was opened at Ilwaco in 1921 and pupils from all points on the railroad used the trains to attend school for several years. But soon a school bus was in operation, and the winter service on the railroad declined to one mixed train a day. Meanwhile the automobile continued to increase in numbers with improved roads, and in the mid-twenties the Union Pacific petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to abandon the line.

Hearings were held in Astoria and the local residents were successful in combatting the petition. But local patronage also declined. The Union Pacific petitioned again and again until permission was finally granted.

The last train southbound left Nahcotta on September 9, 1930. The two coaches were pulled by the little used No. 2 Mogul to the original terminal point at Ilwaco. Along the route the train was greeted by old friends who bemoaned belatedly the end of the railroad that had served them so faithfully for over forty years.

Locomotives 1, 3 and 4 were shipped from Ilwaco to a Portland junkyard, where they were scrapped and shipped to Japan. No. 2 was put to work hauling track and equipment from the Nahcotta end to Ilwaco for scrap. An imaginative resident of the peninsula purchased one of the day coaches for $25 and added it to his home. This started a rush which ceased when all twelve pieces of passenger equipment had been purchased by local people. Sold minus tracks but with couplers and brake rigging, a number of the cars can still be seen serving as summer homes or in other capacities. The boiler of No. 2 was sold to a laundry in Astoria.

The Washington State Highway Department acquired title to most of the old right-of-way, and the modern highway up the peninsula from Long Beach runs over it. So does most of the highway to Megler from a point a mile or so east

of Ilwaco. The tunnel under Fort Columbia was widened for vehicle travel. The surviving remains are a few rails on First Street in Ilwaco and the freight depot there, the depot at Seaview which is now a tavern, and the flag stop station at Tioga, looking now like an old-time shack. A few places between Seaview and Ilwaco, and at the Y, one can still see evidences of the old roadbed. But they are rapidly disappearing.

America's westernmost railroad was a completely equipped narrow-gauge line offering regularly scheduled passenger and freight service, but the area it served was isolated from the population centers. When the automobile made the Oregon beaches below Astoria easily accessible to the people of Portland, the little railroad beside the sandy Pacific beaches became a memory.

SOURCES

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NEWSPAPERS:

The Tribune, Ilwaco, Washington.

Chinook Observer, Chinook, Washington, and Long Beach, Washington.

Long Beach News, Long Beach, Washington.

FORMER EMPLOYEES OF THE RAILROAD:

Mr. David Beechey, Ocean Park, Washington—machinist 1903-1904; 1915-1930.

Mr. Edward Saunders, Ilwaco, Washington—agent at Ilwaco and brakeman, 1910-1913.

Mr. Adolph Wiegardt, Nahcotta, Washington—fireman, 1915-1925.

OLD-TIMERS:

Mr. Herbert Abraham, Seaview, Washington.

Mrs. James Leggett, Ocean Park, Washington.

Mr. Charles H. Fitzpatrick, Ocean Park, Washington.

Mr. Gilbert E. Tinker, Long Beach, Washington.

TIMETABLE

#7 S & S	#5 Daily ex. S & S	#3 Daily	#1 Daily				#2 Daily	#4 Daily	#6 Daily ex. Sunday	#8 Sunday
PM	PM	PM	AM	miles		miles	AM	PM	PM	PM
6.15	5.20	1.20	8.20	1	MEGLAR[1]	27	8.40	1.50	4.50	6.35
f	f	f	f	3	McGowan	24	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	4	Fort Columbia	23	f	f	f	f
6.30	5.35	1.35	8.35	5	CHINOOK[1]	22	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	8.5	Ellis	18.5	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	10.5	Wallicut	16.5	f	f	f	f
6.50	6.00	2.00	9.00	13.5	ILWACO[1]	13.5	7.55	1.05	4.05	4.40
f	f	f	f		Holman		f	f	f	f
7.00	6.15	2.10	9.10	15.5	Seaview	11.5	7.43	12.50	3.53	4.30
f	f	f	f		Shelburne		f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f		Beach Center		f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f		Newton		f	f	f	f
7.15	6.30	2.25	9.30	17	LONG BEACH[2]	10	7.30	12.35	3.40	4.15
f	f	f	f	18	Tioga	9	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	18.5	The Breakers	8.5	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	20	Cranberry	7	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	21	Oceanside	6	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	22.5	Loomis	5.5	f	f	f	f
f	f	f	f	24.5	Klipsan	3.5	f	f	f	f
7.45	6.55	2.50	9.55	26	OCEAN PARK[2]	2	7.05	12.05	3.15	3.50
7.50	7.00	2.55	10.00	27	NAHCOTTA[1]	1	7.00	12.00	3.10	3.45

[1]Year round agencies. [2]Summer agencies only.

Ilwaco, Wash., Terminal—I. R. N. Co.

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